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(2)

ITEM NO: 20H-2

DATE: 27 JULY 1974

SUBJECT: THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

COMMUNIST MILITARY FORCES IN QUANG NAM PROVINCE ARE CONTINUING ARTILLERY AND GROUND ASSAULTS AGAINST SOUTH VIETNAMESE POSITIONS AT THE DISTRICT CAPITAL OF DUC DUC (AN HOA). A GOVERNMENT PRESS SPOKESMAN SAID THE COMMUNISTS FOLLOWED UP A 10,000 ROUND ARTILLERY BARRAGE THIS MORNING WITH GROUND ATTACKS; ~~HE~~ HE CLAIMED THAT OVER 1-100 COMMUNISTS WERE KILLED, MOSTLY FROM AIRSTRIKES.

GENERAL TROUNG,

SAYS HE HAS ENOUGH FORCES TO

CONTAIN COMMUNIST ATTACKS IN THE REGION. GENERAL THI, ON THE

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OTHER HAND, WHO COMMANDS GOVERNMENT FORCES NORTH OF DANANG, IS CONCERNED THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE ENOUGH MEN TO DEFEND HIS AREA, IF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE LAUNCH ATTACKS. HE HAS COMPLAINED TO TROUNG ABOUT THE WITHDRAWAL OF ONE OF HIS REGIMENTS TO QUANG NAM AND CLAIMS THAT IT HAS WEAKENED HIS DEFENSES AROUND HUE.

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COMMUNIST FROGHEN BLEW UP A BRIDGE SPAN THIS MORNING ON ROUTE 1 NORTHWEST OF DANANG, TEMPORARILY CLOSING THE ONLY LAND LINK TO GOVERNMENT FORCES AT HUE AND QUANG TRI. THE BRIDGE WILL BE REPAIRED EVENTUALLY, BUT THE SABOTAGE WILL HAMPER GOVERNMENT FORCES AT LEAST FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS. THE ACTION POINTS UP THE COMMUNIST STRATEGY OF CUTTING KEY HIGHWAYS TO HINDER RE-SUPPLY AND RELOCATION OF GOVERNMENT TROOPS.

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[REDACTED] IN THE HIGHLANDS NORTH VIETNAMESE UNITS HAVE LAUNCHED HEAVY ATTACKS AGAINST THE RANGER OUTPOST AT MANG BUK NORTH OF KONTUM CITY. SINCE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE HAVE SAID THE OUTPOST IS INDEFENSIBLE, THEY PRESUMABLY HAVE ALREADY ABANDONED IT.

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[REDACTED] ACTION HAS INCREASED IN COASTAL

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BINH DINH PROVINCE, PROBABLY TO DRAW SOME ATTENTION AWAY FROM THE FIGHTING IN KONTUM AND QUANG NAM. MOST OF THE ATTACKS SO FAR HAVE BEEN AGAINST AIR BASES, HIGHWAYS, AND STORAGE FACILITIES.

INDICATE THAT

THE COMMUNIST 5TH AND 7TH DIVISIONS MAY BE PLANNING INCREASED ACTION SOON IN MILITARY REGION 3. GOVERNMENT COMMANDERS FEEL THE 5TH WILL MOVE IN FROM CAMBODIA TO TAY NINH PROVINCE AND THAT THE 7TH WILL ATTACK IN BINH DUONG PROVINCE. GOVERNMENT COMMANDERS HAVE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT, IF BOTH DIVISIONS ATTACK AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME, SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES MAY BE UNABLE TO CONTAIN ALL THE ACTION. GOVERNMENT UNITS IN THAT AREA TOOK A BEATING IN HEAVY FIGHTING FROM MAY THROUGH THE FIRST OF JULY AND NEED

ADDITIONAL TIME TO REST AND REFIT.

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